

Seasonal Gr'Eatings!

Making good eating and active living great fun!

Winter Edition



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Celebrate Winter!

The snow is falling, the bears are hibernating — winter is here! This season is full of hearty meals, warm drinks, and countless ways to have fun both indoors and out!

This newsletter has been made available to you by:

Seasonal Produce

Get Back to Your Roots!

What's in season when all you can see is snow? Winter is prime time for root vegetables! They grow below the soil, can live through a cold season, are deeply nourishing, and can be easily stored.

Here are some fun ways to get back to your roots!

- **Beets:** Wash well and slice or grate raw beets over salad, or roast until juicy and eat along with goat cheese.
- **Carrots:** Slice into carrot "coins" and serve with a dip of hummus or salad dressing. Great when kids are hungry after school or when waiting for dinner!
- **Garlic:** Mince and sauté in olive oil with any leafy vegetable like kale, collards, mustard greens, or spinach. Splash a bit of soy sauce, tamari, or Bragg's amino acids.
- **Ginger:** Peel with a spoon and slice or grate into a stir-fry for a fresh twist that helps with digestion.
- **Onions:** Add raw to salads, sauté and cook into soups and stews, or roast with other winter veggies for added heart-healthy flavor.
- **Potatoes (red, white, or sweet):** Cut into thin strips. Brush lightly with olive oil and your favorite spices, then bake in the oven for delicious homemade fries.
- **Rutabaga and Turnips:** Experiment with these hearty roots. Cook up and mash as you would potatoes. Add an apple and a sprinkling of cinnamon for a yummy side dish that tastes like applesauce.

For more snack recipes: <http://foodplay.com/free-materials>



Root for Root Veggies!

Did you know that when we eat vegetables, we're eating all different parts of the plant?

Foods like broccoli and cauliflower are actually flowers. Greens like kale and spinach are the leaves, while celery and asparagus are the stems. When you eat veggies that are in season during winter, you're most likely eating the root of a plant! These are the parts that grow underground, so they're strong and can survive a long, cold winter.

Some great reasons to root for roots:

- **Vitamin A** — Orange root vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes are packed with Vitamin A, which helps improve vision and skin tone.
- **Fiber** — The skin of root veggies is rich in fiber, which helps in digestion and makes you feel full. Wash your root veggies well and eat with the skin.
- **Potassium** — Most people don't eat enough potassium, but roots are great sources of this heart-healthy mineral that may help lower your blood pressure!
- **Heart Health** — Onions and garlic are rich in compounds called alliums, which are linked to healthier hearts and cholesterol levels.
- **Vitamin C** — Most root vegetables contain a lot of this vitamin, which powers up your immune system to fight colds and infections throughout the season.

Thrift
Corner...
Save Time & Money!

Winter Meals on a Budget

Hard times? No time? What's a family to do?

- **Stock up on frozen or canned** fruits, beans, vegetables, and tomato sauce, especially during sales. Don't have a big family? Find a friend to shop with and split the groceries.
- **Make the most of seasonal foods** like potatoes, beets, turnips, and carrots, or fruits with a long shelf life like apples. They're often less costly than imported produce, and can store well in a cool, dark place.
- **Serve breakfast for dinner.** The most important meal of the day can also be the least expensive, so don't be afraid to defy the norms. Try eggs, whole-wheat banana pancakes, or hot cereal with nuts and fruit (try frozen berries) as a delicious and low-budget way to serve up a kid-friendly dinner.
- **Super Soups:** Make a large batch of soup over the weekend, and freeze for future meals. See if you can barter with a friend, give her some of your soup, and get some of hers! Make some meals with hot soup, a chunk of whole grain bread, and cheese!
- **Revisit a classic.** Few lunch box foods are as economical as the classic **PB & J**. Try a new twist by adding bananas, thinly sliced apples, dried fruit, or almond butter. Try on different breads, like raisin or whole wheat.
- **Try a crock pot.** Put the ingredients together in the morning, slow cook all day, and come home to a home-cooked meal! Check out crock pot recipes online.
- **Winter farmers' markets?** Check out if your town has a farmers' market or CSA to join in winter. Buy locally grown foods in season. Cook up a batch of meals on the weekend, and store in the fridge or freezer for meals all week long.
- **Create a pot of beans** (see next page), and turn it into meals and side dishes such as chili, soup, stew, enchiladas, and rice and beans.

Celebrate National Nutrition Month!

For fun ways to make good eating great fun, visit us...



Free Materials: www.foodplay.com/free-materials

Live Shows: www.foodplay.com/live-shows

FoodPlay Store: www.foodplay.com/shop
(For Fruit and Veggie Tracker Bands, Passports, Books, T-Shirts, and new DVDs)

KIDS' KITCHEN

(For grown-ups to make...with a little help from kids!)

Movie Night: Make your own Popcorn!

(1/3 cup popcorn kernels = 2 quarts popped corn)

1. In a large pot, spread a few Tablespoons of vegetable oil (like canola, peanut, or other high smoke-point oils) so it lightly coats the bottom of the pot.
2. Put stove burner on medium high heat, add a few test kernels, and cover pot.
3. When test kernels start to pop, add rest of kernels in an even layer.
4. Cover, remove from heat, and wait 30 seconds.
5. Return covered pot to stove and reduce heat slightly. Kernels will begin popping shortly.
6. With pot holders, gentle shake pot, moving back and forth over burner.
7. When you stop hearing popping for several seconds, remove from heat, carefully remove lid, and dump popcorn into a big bowl.
8. Salt or add fun toppings to taste!



Fun Toppings! Have a family "taste test." Try different toppings and see which one is the favorite:

- Cinnamon and Nutmeg
- Grated Parmesan Cheese
- Nutritional Yeast

Special Trick: to give home-made popcorn a buttery taste, sprinkle a little water onto hot popcorn, then add the seasoning!



Veggie Confetti

Wash and cut up crunchy raw veggies into small pieces (try with green and red peppers, carrots, celery, jícama, radishes, or whatever you have in the fridge). Mix up in a bowl. If you want, drizzle on some salad dressing, and eat like popcorn!

For more snack recipes: <http://foodplay.com/free-materials>

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Spotlight on: Super Beans!



One of the most perfect foods Mother Nature ever created is the BEAN—protein-packed morsels wrapped in a shell of fiber. Beans come in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes and flavors, and can be found as a basic ingredient in almost every culture’s cuisines. Beans are a high nutrition, low cost food that can be used in virtually any type of meal. They’re the ultimate super food! To make beans more kid-friendly, add them gradually to dishes such as pasta, tacos, casseroles, and soups where they can blend in with sauces and other ingredients.



Be’an Smart About Beans

- Many people have trouble digesting the natural sugar, raffinose, in beans. To minimize stomach discomfort, rinse canned beans thoroughly and cook in fresh water, or follow the directions below to use dried beans.
- Beans are considered to be an incomplete protein. This means that they do not contain every amino acid your body needs. To make a complete protein and maximize the nutritional benefits, pair beans with a whole grain such as brown rice, quinoa, barley, or corn.
- Cook a big pot of beans and store in the fridge so you can add them to dishes all week long.

Around the World with Beans

Beans play a starring role in almost every culture’s cuisine. Travel the world of beans, trying a new type each month for festive meals with international flair!

Edamame (soybeans in the pod) — Purchase frozen, steam or simmer in water for a few minutes until pods are soft yet beans are firm, sprinkle with salt. Kids LOVE these!

Kidney Beans — Use in your favorite chili recipe.

Chickpeas (garbanzo beans) — Add to any cold pasta or vegetable salad.

Lentils — Simmer in water or chicken/vegetable broth for approximately 25 minutes and serve over rice.

Pinto Beans — Add seasonings and use for tacos, enchiladas, or tostadas.

Black-Eyed Peas — Add to spicy or Cajun foods for a southern treat. Delicious served with a side of sautéed cabbage — a special meal to bring good luck in the new year.

Make Your Own!

For a fresher taste, cook up dried beans instead of opening a can. To make beans most digestible and tasty, soak and cook them yourself. Rinse your beans, remove any foreign matter, and pick your method:

Quick Boil

1. Boil beans in water in a heavy pot until soft (2-3 hours)
2. Drain and discard the water and rinse beans.
3. Proceed with your recipe.

Long Soak

1. Place beans in a pot of water and leave on the counter overnight (or for 6-8 hours).
2. Drain the water, and rinse beans.
3. Simmer beans in water in a heavy pot until soft (1-2 hours).
4. Drain, rinse, and proceed with your recipe.



Veggie Chili for Chilly Days

(Black Bean Stew)

Serves 4-6

The idea behind this “black bean stew” is that it can be used as a base recipe to make everything from tacos to hummus...and kids like it!

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1 Tbsp olive oil | 1 cup mushrooms, sliced |
| 1 medium onion, chopped | 1 cup spinach (no stems) |
| 2 cloves garlic, chopped | 1 tsp cumin; 1 tsp oregano |
| 2 carrots, diced | 1 Tbsp chili powder |
| 1 red pepper, diced | dash of cayenne pepper |
| 1 (15 oz) can diced tomatoes | |
| 1 (29 oz) can black beans, or 3 ½ cups cooked beans | |

Directions:

1. Sauté onions, garlic, carrots, and red pepper in olive oil until carrots just begin to soften.
2. Add mushrooms, spinach, and spices. Cook until spinach is wilted.
3. Add rest of ingredients. Bring to a boil. Simmer for 15 minutes.

(Recipe from the book *Things to do with Black Bean Stew*, by Bill Bradley, RD, LDN)

When it's too cold to play outside, create this "Take a Break!" can to encourage kids to be active inside, rather than reach for the remote. Cover a plastic container or empty coffee can with a label which reads "Take a Break!" Have kids cut out these fun ideas to fill the can —or have them make up their own! Whenever boredom strikes, have kids reach in and pick an activity!



Make cleaning fun! Crank up the music and whoever puts away the most items before a song ends wins a prize.	Create a circus! Create your own act and put on a show.
Play charades. Act out fun sports and games, and have everyone guess what they are.	Learn a line dance, such as the Macarena or the Cupid Shuffle.
Revisit favorites. Try Ring-Around-the-Rosie, Duck Duck Goose, Mother May I, or the Hokey Pokey.	Foam balls can make sports such as "catch" possible indoors. Pick up a nerf ball and toss or kick it around!
Play "Keep the Balloon Up." Give one balloon to each child and see who can keep theirs up in the air the longest. Or, play balloon volleyball.	Dance! Put on a catchy song and boogie. Have a contest for who can create the coolest dance move. Or, play follow-the-leader, and teach each other your dances. Pretend YOU are leading "Dance Dance Revolution!"
Practice yoga. Play some peaceful music and slowly move each part of the body — roll the neck, circle the arms, flex the fingers, lunge the legs.	Freeze-Dance! Crank some music and tell everyone to dance. When you cut the volume, they must freeze where they are. Whoever moves is out. Last one standing wins!
Get hula-hoops! They're inexpensive and can provide hours of entertainment.	Make a puppet show...out of anything! An old sock, a paper bag, or cut out some cartoon characters found on your cereal boxes. Create a story and act it out!
Lava is everywhere! Throw a few pillows and blankets on the floor. These are "rocks," and kids can only step on them, or they will "fall" into the lava. See how long they can hop around!	Play sardines. This is reverse hide-and-seek: one person hides, and everyone else searches for them. If you find them, you must hide with them. Last one to find the group is "it!"
Write cartoon strips. Choose a character for the story, such as a family pet, and take them on wild adventures!	Play "Simon Says." Get creative with lines like, "Simon says climb an imaginary beanstalk that reaches into the clouds."
Play a hand clap game such as Miss Mary Mac, or create your own by clapping and stepping to a favorite song.	Make your own TV show! Could be a game show, soap opera, or reality TV show!
Collect pine cones for craft projects. Make a bird feeder — cover pine cone with peanut butter, roll in bird seed, hang outside, and watch the birds stop by for lunch!	If it has snowed, try building an igloo, make a snowman, or find a nice hill to climb up and sled down! (Make sure to get your parents' permission first.)
Do Tai Chi for the Animals! Take on the poses of some of your favorite animals in the forest. Keep the pose for at least sixty seconds, but remember to breathe! Some fun ones are: bear, deer, muskrat, skunk, snake, or tiger!	Help your mom or dad with a chore! It could be cleaning the room, helping with recycling, washing dishes, etc.
Pretend you're a famous athlete and make your own exercise routine. Lead an exercise class for everyone in your family!	Set up an obstacle course indoors! Crawl under a table, climb over a stool, spin around three times on a mat, do a log roll, and hop four times over a row of stuffed animals. Create your own!